

Amendment to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0036] with the following amended paragraph:

[0036] The encryption algorithm used to protect the base key prior to its transfer from sender to recipient preferably is a public-key (asymmetric) algorithm in which the recipient's public key is used by the sender to encrypt the ~~packet~~ base key and the corresponding private key is used by the recipient to decrypt it. The private keys used by the public key algorithm may contain protocol or formatting information in addition to key data bits. The number of key data bits (the key size) is scalable for different applications, based on security requirements, but at least 607 bit keys must be allowable. A specific application may permit only a single key size to be used, or may handle multiple key sizes.